

For nearly 40 years I've considered CW operation a major part of my enjoyment of Amateur Radio. It's a very efficient mode of transmission, if not of communication, and it's accessible to any amateur operator with a basic rig without the need for sophisticated equipment. Moreover, it's an important tie to the traditions and historical origins of the Amateur Radio Service.

Nonetheless, I support the proposal to no longer require demonstration of Morse code proficiency as a condition of operation on the HF bands. Eliminating this requirement should enable many more hams to enjoy HF privileges, and competency with code is not an indicator of competency to operate on the HF bands in other modes. Ultimately, this change should help increase the numbers of licensed HF operators, which the Amateur Radio Service needs to reinforce the legitimacy of our claim to valuable spectrum.

I do recommend, however, that passing a 5 WPM code test remain a requirement for the Amateur Extra class license, and that the existing CW sub-bands reserved for Extra class operators remain available only to holders of that license class. These small perks for those who demonstrate CW ability will help preserve a noble tradition and at the same time improve the odds for enjoyable DXing, contesting and ragchewing via Morse Code to those who care to acquire that extra skill.

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